

**Amendments to the Claims:**

Claim 1 (original): An additional information processing apparatus comprising:  
an image acquisition component which acquires input image data in which additional information is embedded;  
an extracting component which extracts the additional information from the input image data; and  
an additional information modification component which generates new additional information by modifying the additional information when determining that the additional information complies with a predetermined condition, and generates copied image data by embedding the new additional information into the input image data or image data obtained by removing the additional information from the input image data.

Claim 2 (original): The additional information processing apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein:

said additional information contains copy control information for limiting an allowable number of times the input image data is copied; and  
when determining that the copy control information contains a variable value representing permission to copy the input image data, said additional information modification component generates the new additional information by modifying the variable value and generates the copied image data.

Claim 3 (original): The additional information processing apparatus according to Claim 2, wherein said additional information modification component determines that the copy control information contains the variable value representing permission to copy the input image data when the variable value is within a predetermined range.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The additional information processing apparatus according to Claim 2 or 3, wherein said additional information modification component modifies the variable value by a smaller amount with a higher level of access authorization of a

user, and modifies the variable value by a larger amount with a lower level of the access authorization level of a user.

Claim 5 (currently amended): The additional information processing apparatus according to ~~any one of Claims~~ Claim 2 to 4, further comprising a recording component which stores the additional information extracted by said extracting component, wherein:

when determining that the additional information contains a flag value representing image data of an original file and the same additional information is not stored in said recording component, said additional information modification component generates the new additional information to write the generated new additional information into the recording component and generates the copied image data;

when determining that the additional information contains a flag value representing the image data of an original file and that the same additional information is stored in said recording component, said additional information modification component modifies the variable value that is contained within the additional information stored in said recording component, and generates the new additional information and the copied image data; and

when determining that the additional information contains a flag value not representing the image data of an original file, said additional information modification component does not generate the copied image data.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The additional information processing apparatus according to ~~any one of Claims~~ Claim 1 to 5, wherein, when determining that the additional information contains a flag value representing image data of an original file, said additional information modification component generates the new additional information by changing the flag value to a value not representing image data of an original file, and generates the copied image data.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The additional information processing apparatus according to ~~any one of Claims~~ Claim 1 to 6, wherein, when determining that a level of access authorization of a user is equal to or larger than a predetermined level, said additional information modification component can provide the copied image data having the same

additional information as that of the input image data, without generating the new additional information.

Claim 8 (currently amended): The additional information processing apparatus according to ~~any one of Claims~~ Claim 1 to 7, wherein said additional information modification component generates the new additional information by adding personal identification information of a user to the additional information.

Claim 9 (currently amended): The additional information processing apparatus according to ~~any one of Claims~~ Claim 1 to 8, wherein said additional information modification component generates the new additional information by adding identification information of a system to the additional information, said additional information processing apparatus is integrated in said system.

Claim 10 (currently amended): An additional information processing system comprising:

an additional information processing apparatus according to ~~any one of Claims~~ Claim 1 to 9;

a scanner which obtains the input image data by optically scanning a printed medium in which the additional information is embedded; and

a printer which prints out the copied image data.

Claim 11 (original): The additional information processing system according to Claim 10, further comprising a data receiving unit which receives image data transmitted through a communication line and provides the received image data to the image acquisition component.

Claim 12 (currently amended): The additional information processing system according to Claim 10 or ~~Claim 11~~, further comprising a data sending unit which sends the copied image data to said communication line.

Claim 13 (currently amended): The additional information processing system according to ~~any one of Claims~~ Claim 10 to 12, further comprising a display unit which displays one or both of the additional information extracted by said extracting component and the new additional information.

Claim 14 (original): An additional information processing system comprising: an additional information processing apparatus according to Claim 8; and an information reading unit which reads personal identification information from a recording medium storing the personal identification information of a user, and provides the read personal identification information to said additional information processing apparatus.

Claim 15 (currently amended): An additional information processing system comprising:

an additional information processing apparatus according to Claim 4 or ~~Claim 7~~; and an information reading unit which reads access authorization from a recording medium storing the access authorization of a user, and provides the read access authorization to said additional information processing apparatus.

Claim 16 (original): An additional information processing method comprising the steps of:

- (a) acquiring input image data in which additional information is embedded;
- (b) extracting the additional information from the input image data;
- (c) determining whether or not the extracted additional information complies with a predetermined condition; and
- (d) generating new additional information by modifying the additional information when it is determined in said step (c) that the additional information complies with said predetermined condition, and generating copied image data by embedding the new additional information into the input image data or image data obtained by removing the additional information from the input image data.

Claim 17 (new): The additional information processing apparatus according to Claim 3, wherein said additional information modification component modifies the variable value by a smaller amount with a higher level of access authorization of a user, and modifies the variable value by a larger amount with a lower level of the access authorization level of a user.

Claim 18 (new): The additional information processing system according to Claim 11, further comprising a data sending unit which sends the copied image data to said communication line.

Claim 19 (new): An additional information processing system comprising: an additional information processing apparatus according to Claim 7; and an information reading unit which reads access authorization from a recording medium storing the access authorization of a user, and provides the read access authorization to said additional information processing apparatus.